

Message Text

SECRET POSS DUPE

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 IO-13 /061 W

----- 127269

R 060735Z NOV 76

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3793

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 1657

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, SY

SUBJ: IRAQI-SYRIAN RELATIONS

REF: BAGHDAD 1645

1. IRAQI-SYRIAN RELATIONS CONTINUE TENSE WITH WITHDRAWAL OF HEAD OF IRAQI MISSION IN DAMASCUS AND BRIEF CLOSING OF BORDER ON NOVEMBER 2. OUR CONTACTS ASSURE US THAT BORDER CLOSING WAS AS RESULT OF CLOSING OF RUTBA ROAD WHILE IRAQI ARMY MOVED EQUIPMENT FOR UPCOMING TRAINING MANEUVERS FROM NOVEMBER 5 THROUGH NOVEMBER 10.

2. WITHDRAWAL OF HEAD OF MISSION WAS DESIGNED TO GIVE FURTHER PUBLICITY TO IRAQ'S DISAPPROVAL OF SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON, BUT WE UNDERSTAND THAT REST OF MISSION WILL REMAIN IN DAMASCUS AND CONTINUE TO FUNCTION UNDER THE CONTROL OF CHARGE.

3. WHILE IRAQI INTENTIONS ARE NOT EASY TO FATHOM, WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF WITHDRAWAL OF HEAD OF MISSION WAS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE COVER FOR REDUCTION OF IRAQI TROOP STRENGTH ON SYRIAN BORDER FOLLOWING MANEUVERS. IF TROOP WITHDRAWAL WERE NOT ACCOMPANIED BY SOME SUCH GESTURE, GOI WOULD FEAR THAT OBSERVERS

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MIGHT CONCLUDE THAT IRAQ NO LONGER CONCERNED OVER SYRIAN INTERVENTION IN LEBANON.

WILEY

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